

EPA's Exposure Factors Program

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Risk Assessments are important components of the decision-making process. Therefore, it is critical that the best up-to-date methods, models, and exposure data are available to the exposure and risk assessor to realistically estimate the potential for human and ecological exposures to environmental contaminants. The EPA *Exposure Factors Handbook* is a tool available to exposure assessors that summarizes statistical data on exposure factors necessary to conduct human health exposure assessments. These factors include water consumption, soil ingestion, inhalation rates, surface area, soil adherence to skin, body weight, life expectancy, food consumption, breast milk consumption, activity patterns, consumer product use, and residential building characteristics. Since its publication, the *Handbook* has been the primary source of data for human exposure assessments. Many EPA program offices use data from the *Handbook* and have adopted its recommendations in their exposure and risk assessments. The use of the *Handbook* has resulted in more consistency among exposure assessments conducted by the Agency. Although the *Handbook* is widely used in the Agency, its use has not been limited to EPA. The *Handbook* has had a wide application among exposure assessors in the U.S. and around the world. In addition to the *Exposure Factors Handbook*, the National Center for Environmental Assessment has published a *Child-Specific Exposure Factors Handbook*, which summarizes exposure data specific to children. The *Exposure Factors Handbook* and the *Child-Specific Exposure Factors Handbook* are the two major components of a more comprehensive program that addresses issues related to exposure factors. The *Exposure Factors Program* is a comprehensive program with the primary goal of compiling, analyzing, and summarizing exposure factors data to be used in future updates of the *Exposure Factors Handbook* and the *Child-Specific Exposure Factors Handbook*. The poster presents an overview of the *Exposure Factors Program*, describes its goals, on-going research, and future plans.